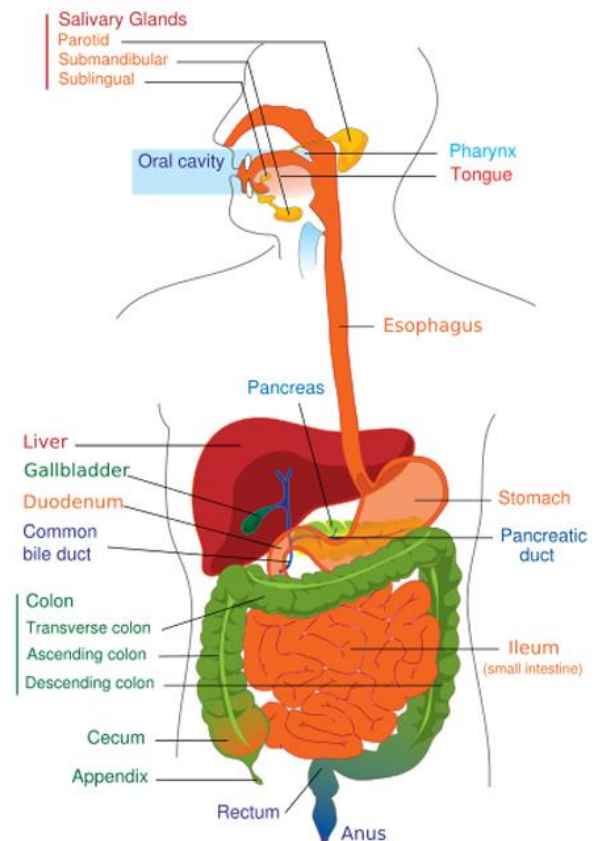


COULD THE KUNDALINI SHAKTI AWAKENING BE CAUSED BY BACTERIA (OR OTHER MICROORGANISMS – VIRUSES, FUNGI, ARCHAEA ETC.) AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON OUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM, ENTERIC NERVOUS SYSTEM, AND EVERY OTHER PART OF OUR PHYSICAL BODY AND BRAIN?

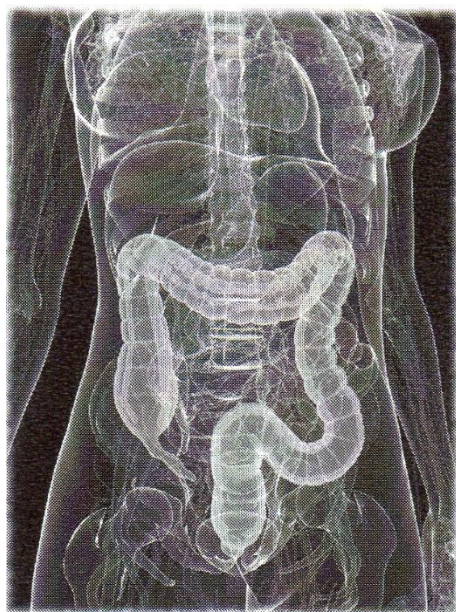
Could Kundalini Shakti involve microbial carriers in the digestive system, which can mutate and invade the body, brain, and nervous system, and change drastically the way they work? Evidence:

- "Shaktipat" involves the guru's touch, or being in his presence – perhaps to transmit the Kundalini "infection" via microbes?
- Kissing the guru's feet and hands - more Kundalini microbial transmission?
- Drinking guru's bath water – ditto?
- The tantric rites of the Bauls and other sects sometimes involve consumption of blood, excrement, semen, urine, menses, etc. - these are all full of bacteria and microbes. Perhaps these rites transmit the mutated "kundalini" germs from host to recipient.
- Could Kundalini awakening be like catching the flu?
- The "coiled serpent", Kundalini, is traditionally described as a hollow tube coiled 3 1/2 times around the base of the spine, stretching from the anus to a point between the eyebrows.
- Could this represent, almost exactly, the human digestive system? The large intestine coils 3 1/2 times from the anus (ascending colon, transverse colon, descending colon, and rectum = 3 1/2). The digestive system then coils further in the small intestine, and proceeds via the stomach and throat to the mouth and sinuses behind the eyes. (See diagram at right - it even looks like a serpent, with its head raised ready to strike.) Could the major parts of the G.I. tract and enteric nervous system be the real "chakras"?
- Kundalini awakening involves digestive upset, "psychedelic" perceptual and physical changes (perhaps due to secretions of chemicals and neurotransmitters caused by microbes), and anxiety, terror, and many other physical, mental, and emotional responses. It is a **physical process**.
- How do the vagus nerve and neurotransmitters in the gut affect the brain and body? How are they influenced by bacteria and other microbes? Is the million-year-old symbiotic relationship between our own cells and our bacterial cells far deeper and more important than we know?
- The sahasrara or "thousand petalled lotus" may simply represent the "thousand lobed brain", whose stalk is the spinal cord and whose roots are the entire nervous system. The G.I. tract, particularly the large intestine, is the Kundalini, the "coiled serpent", which is the home of trillions upon trillions of bacteria and other microorganisms. These process our food for us and thus provide the material forming our bodies. They produce neurotransmitters, drugs, hormones, chemicals, and other substances in great profusion, which affect every part of our existence and experience. They also affect the brain directly through the vagus nerve.
- The awakening of Kundalini may involve some sort of change to the microbial community in our digestive system, leading to completely altered internal chemistry and influencing our brain directly and indirectly. Perhaps the awakening of the various chakras involves the progressive migration of this altered microbial community from our eliminative, sexual and digestive organs



and cavities (muladhara, svadhisthana, and manipura chakras) to other parts of the body, such as the chest and lung and heart cavities (anahata chakra), throat cavity (vishuddha chakra), sinuses (ajna chakra), and brain ventricles (sahasrara chakra). All these areas of the chakras are in fact common sites of bacterial infections – perhaps Kundalini awakening is a beneficial form of bacterial infection.

- The microbial community we have co-evolved with over billions of years may be more integral to us than we realise and may be primed to change into a completely different form if and when we provide the necessary conditions. This changed microbial community could then be transferred to others in the same way other infections are – bodily fluids, breathing, touching, kissing, food etc. – thus transferring the Kundalini awakening/infection. The strange rituals of some Indian practitioners, involving such things as drinking each other's bodily fluids, kissing the guru's feet, exchanging food ("prasad"), drinking the guru's bathwater, spending as much time with the guru as possible, etc., may be ways of transferring the Kundalini infection.
- The sahasrara is the "thousand-petalled lotus, the thousand-lobed brain, whose stalk is the spinal cord and whose roots, the millions of nerve fibres coursing through the body, sit in and gain their nourishment from the muddy waters of the gut, with its trillions of bacteria and other microbes churning away producing the "nectar of immortality". The symbolism of the pure lotus flower growing from the muddy waters of the lake and gaining its nourishment from it is very appropriate.
- Recent studies show that microbes can exchange genetic material horizontally between each other during a single generation, not just vertically from one generation to the next. They can also transfer DNA into totally unrelated species such as us. (It has been found that about 8% of human DNA originally came from retroviruses transferring "alien" DNA into our ancestors). Perhaps the "kundalini microbe", if it exists, can totally transform a suitable human symbiont via genetic exchange with its resident microbes, and perhaps even genetic "tweaking" of our own cells. The possibilities are immense, when you consider bacteria and other microbes cover every nanometre of our skin, hair, and mucous membranes, as well as residing in our gut and every other organ of our body.



KUNDALINI –

(from *The Complete Yoga Book*, James Hewitt, Cresset Press, 1983)

“According to Yogic tradition, *kundalini* is a concentration of Cosmic Life Energy or *prana-Shakti*, dormant at the base of the spine and symbolically represented as a serpent, coiled three and a half times, closing with her mouth the entrance to the fine channel (*shushumna*) leading upward through the spinal cord to the crown of the head, where Siva awaits, triggering *samadhi*. The ascending force passes through several key centres, called *chakras*, of which by main tradition there are seven.” (p. 461)

“The *sushumna* is the fine channel which carries *kundalini* energy. Taking the two main views, it is either physically located as the vagus or pneumogastric, the tenth cranial nerve,

or is considered to be part of the invisible network of channels of the astral body. The former view is argued in detail by Dr Vansant Rele in *The Mysterious Kundalini*; he also states the case for the *chakras* being nerve plexuses. On either side of the astral tube or *shushumna* run two other tubes called *ida* and *pingala*, which carry nerve currents up and down the body.” (pp. 463-4)

Vagus Nerve as Modulator of the Brain–Gut Axis in Psychiatric and inflammatory Disorders

Sigrid Breit^{1†}, Aleksandra Kupferberg^{1†}, Gerhard Rogler² and Gregor Hasler^{1*}

(Frontiers in Psychiatry, 13 March 2018)

INTRODUCTION

The bidirectional communication between the brain and the gastrointestinal tract, the so-called “brain–gut axis,” is based on a complex system, including the vagus nerve, but also sympathetic (e.g. *via* the prevertebral ganglia), endocrine, immune, and humoral links as well as the influence of gut microbiota in order to regulate gastrointestinal homeostasis and to connect emotional and cognitive areas of the brain with gut functions (1). The ENS produces more than 30 neurotransmitters and has more neurons than the spine. Hormones and peptides that the ENS releases into the blood circulation cross the blood–brain barrier (e.g., ghrelin) and can act synergistically with the vagus nerve, for example to regulate food intake and appetite (2). The brain–gut axis is becoming increasingly important as a therapeutic target for gastrointestinal and psychiatric disorders, such as inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) (3), depression (4), and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (5). The gut is an important control center of the immune system and the vagus nerve has immunomodulatory properties (6). As a result, this nerve plays important roles in the relationship between the gut, the brain, and inflammation. There are new treatment options for modulating the brain–gut axis, for example, vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) and meditation techniques. These treatments have been shown to be beneficial in mood and anxiety disorders (7–9), but also in other conditions associated with increased inflammation (10). In particular, gut-directed hypnotherapy was shown to be effective in both, irritable bowel syndrome and IBD (11, 12). Finally, the vagus nerve also represents an important link between nutrition and psychiatric, neurological and inflammatory diseases.

